



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
Friday, February 10, 2017**

Proposed SB 34, An Act Concerning The Recognition Of Stroke Centers

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **Proposed SB 34, An Act Concerning The Recognition Of Stroke Centers**. CHA has concerns about the bill.

Before commenting on the bill, it's important to point out that Connecticut hospitals provide high quality care for everyone, regardless of ability to pay. Connecticut hospitals are finding innovative solutions to integrate and coordinate care to better serve patients and communities, as well as achieve health equity. These dynamic, complex organizations are working to build a healthier Connecticut. That means building a healthy economy, community, and healthcare system. By investing in the future of Connecticut's healthcare and hospitals, rather than continuing to cut away at them, we will strengthen our economy, put communities to work, and deliver affordable care that Connecticut families deserve.

As a proposed bill, SB 34 requires the state to establish a process to recognize comprehensive stroke centers, primary stroke centers, and acute stroke-ready hospitals. SB 34 does not detail the process or standards that would be used in designating comprehensive stroke centers, primary stroke centers, and acute stroke-ready hospitals in the state.

We caution against establishing any system by which the patients may be led to believe that distance or proximity to emergency care is unimportant – even when proximity to an emergency department may be the only thing that saves a patient's life. We support efforts to improve care across the board, but have concerns that this bill would establish a system that freezes in time what care is delivered at what institution for specific conditions. Cutting edge medical innovations and developments can be discovered and invented in bursts, practically overnight. The landscape for care in any specific disease or medical area is subject to constant change and innovation. In the last decade alone, there have been substantial developments in a variety of cardiac care protocols and approaches -- including for stroke.

As a matter of practice, hospitals across the state participate in a number of voluntary quality and specialty designation programs. All Connecticut hospitals are accredited through The Joint Commission, adhering to the highest standards of patient care.

As with every proposed bill, there is little detail of the process to be used to designate stroke centers. If the Committee intends to create a designation and recognition system, we ask that it be done with the utmost caution, taking into consideration all the factors that ensure patients receive the best and most appropriate care at the right time.

Thank you for your consideration of our position. For additional information, contact CHA Government Relations at (203) 294-7310.